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ABSTRACT

This manual was developed for individuals serving as mentors in Evergreen Valley College's PUENTE Project, a program which integrates the skills of an English teacher, a Hispanic counselor, and Hispanic professionals/mentors into a team structure in an attempt to assist Hispanic students in making academic improvements, to build self-confidence, and to motivate students to achieve career and educational goals. The manual covers the following: (1) a description of the PUENTE Project, including information on the PUENTE model, the program sequence, and data on student achievement; (2) an examination of the role of a mentor; (3) an article on "The Value of Mentoring," by Mauro Chavez; and (4) information on the process whereby students contact and set up formal and informal interviews with their mentors. Appendices include a copy of the student guide for interviewing mentors; a list of student assignments for PUENTE mentor activities; a sample student paper on "Career Decisions"; lists of personnel and colleges involved in the project; a sample mentor profile form, and a PUENTE Project booklet. (UCM)

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PUENTE PROJECT

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The Mentor's Guide

Fall 1987

Margarita Maestas-Flores and Mauro Chavez

San Jose/Evergreen Community College District

Evergreen Valley College

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WELCOME TO PUENTE !

MENTORING MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

JESSICA AVILA, 1986-87

"I'm really glad that I got to know my mentor. If he can do it, so can I. He has inspired me to continue school and to get what I want out of life." (MENTOR: GUS LERMA, LOCKHEED)

JACKIE RAMIREZ, 1986-87

"I felt the interview with my mentor was very interesting. He made me feel comfortable. I learned that education is very important; without it most doors are closed. I know that I can be whatever I want, just by putting my mind to it and dedicating my life to it." (MENTOR: CHIEF IKE HERNANDEZ, SJPD)

SAM PEREA, 1986-87

"The whole experience was enlightening. It was rich in advice and friendship. He helped to boost my self-esteem and determination in reaching my goals in life." (MENTOR: DANIEL REYES, GAVILAN COLLEGE)

ROXANNE PEREA, 1986-87

"I gained a sense of how to go about getting a college degree. Mr. Romero provided me with an insightful look at my future. (MENTOR: FRANK ROMERO, BANK OF AMERICA)

BARBARA SENA, 1986-87

"Sitting behind his desk, my mentor is a vision of me six years from now." (MENTOR: JOHN TORRES, CTC)

PEARL DELGADO, 1986-87

"I would say to students: 'Don't be afraid to make an important figure a friend.'" (MENTOR: EMALIE ORTEGA, SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY)

ARMANDINA PERALTA, 1986-87

"My mentor experience was a real turn on! I learned that Hispanic women can make it as professionals." (MENTOR: ANGELES LUNA, CALIFORNIA FEDERAL SAVINGS & LOAN)

JAMES COTA, 1986-87

"Through the mentor experience I learned that important people are real people too!" (MENTOR: RUDY LOPEZ, IBM)

EILEEN CASTRO, 1986-87

"I was impressed with the mentor's openness, friendliness, and his overall big effort to help me." (MENTOR: VICTOR GARZA, JTPA)

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PREFACE

The following materials and information were compiled to assist you, a mentor for the PUENTE Project, in understanding the project's development, implementation, goals, success, and needs. The information is derived from a cross-section of individuals, the statewide project, and PUENTE projects at other California Community Colleges.

We at Evergreen Valley College continue to appreciate your willingness to serve as one of our project mentors and welcome your contributions on further development of the mentorship component.

Margarita Maestas-Flores

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Evergreen Valley College
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PUENTE PROJECT DESCRIPTION

EVERGREEN VALLEY COLLEGE

PUENTE PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Evergreen Valley College

Prepared by
Mauro Chavez

INTRODUCTION

The PUENTE Project was launched at Evergreen Valley College in the Fall Semester of 1983. The goal was to field-test a year-long (fall/spring) writing/counseling/mentorship model designed to help Hispanic students to achieve academically and to compete successfully in the general education curriculum. The project model consisted of a two-semester course sequence: English 330 (Improvement in Writing) offered in the fall semester and English 1A (English Composition) offered in the spring semester. Since the first PUENTE Project sequence was completed during the 1983-84 school year, PUENTE has now become an integral part of the college structure, beginning its fifth year in the Fall 1987 Semester.

PUENTE MODEL

PUENTE integrates the skills of an English teacher, a Hispanic counselor, and Hispanic professionals into a team structure which attempts to assist Hispanic students make academic improvements, to build self-confidence, and to motivate them to achieve educational and career goals. Working together, the counselor, teacher, and mentor provide students with individual, non-traditional counseling, with writing instruction that engenders improvement in all college course work, and with personal contact with Hispanic professionals who serve as role models and mentors.

This process of linking classroom learning with community mentors has proven highly successful. Students not only gain a greater understanding of "what it takes" to "make it," but students learn that professional success does not mean--as some students assert--"forgetting who you are." Students develop a greater appreciation and respect for the ability of mentors to effectively bridge two worlds.

PROGRAM SEQUENCE

The student takes two English courses: the first, an entry-level writing class (i.e., English 330 at EVC); the second, English 1A, the college transfer-level composition class. The same students remain with the same teacher for the entire two-course sequence. In conjunction with classroom

activities, a counselor meets regularly with students to set career goals, to plan appropriate studies for transfer or occupational paths, and to provide motivation. A third staff member is primarily responsible for recruiting mentors, for matching students with mentors, and serving as mentor liaison. A fourth member supervises and evaluates mentor/student outcomes and program results.

In order to meet the needs of an even greater number of EVC Hispanic students, PUENTE will start an additional course sequence (English 330/English 1A) in the Spring 1988 Semester. Hence, two PUENTE course sequences will operate simultaneously throughout the school year.

Example: Sequence #1: Fall/English 330; Spring/English 1A

Sequence #2: Spring/English 330; Fall/English 1A

DATA ON PUENTE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

A three-year comparative study (1983-1986) between 115 PUENTE Hispanic students and 273 non-PUENTE Hispanic students at Evergreen Valley College revealed several significant facts:

1. PUENTE students were almost twice as likely to complete English 330 than other Hispanic students enrolled in English 330 (89% : 46%).

2. PUENTE students completed English 1A at a rate nine times higher than their counterparts (70% : 8%).

3. PUENTE students completed English 1B at a rate 14 times greater (14% : 1%).

4. PUENTE students were three times as likely to remain enrolled in Evergreen Valley College (53% : 17%).

Moreover, while PUENTE students accounted for only 30 percent of the total Hispanic students enrolled in English 330 during fall 1983, fall 1984, and fall 1985, they accounted for 45 percent of the total number of Hispanics who completed English 330; 80 percent of the total who completed English 1A; 89 percent of the total who finished English 1B; and 56 percent of the total number of Hispanics currently enrolled in EVC who began at the English 330 level.

Furthermore, of all the Hispanic students, (PUENTE and non-PUENTE) who began English 330 during fall 1983 and fall 1984, approximately 4 students have received the A.A. degree; 7 students have applied for the A.A. degree, Fall 1986 Semester; and 10 students are eligible for the A.A. degree at the end of the Spring 1987 Semester. All 21 of these students were from the PUENTE Project.

Finally, of all the Hispanic students (PUENTE and non-PUENTE) who began English 330 during fall 1983 and fall 1984, approximately 4 students have transferred to a four-year college; 10 have applied for transfer, Fall 1986 Semester. All 14 of these transfer students were from the PUENTE Project.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The evaluative data derived from the three-year study had significance for the college and for the Hispanic community. Several conclusions were drawn:

1. The study largely confirmed the effectiveness of the PUENTE model in improving the academic achievement levels of Hispanic students.

2. The PUENTE Project served to more successfully "mainstream" "remedial-English" Hispanic students into the regular general education curriculum, as evidenced by comparative data on total units completed and completion of English 1A and 1B requirements.

3. PUENTE students had comparatively higher retention levels than their (non-PUENTE) Hispanic counterparts at EVC.

4. By improving the retention of Hispanic students, the PUENTE Project greatly enhanced the transfer potential of Hispanics to four-year institutions, as well as their completion of their requirements for the A.A. degree.

5. The PUENTE Project maximized the opportunity for Hispanics to meet the matriculation goals of the San Jose/Evergreen Community College District.

WHAT IS A MENTOR?

WHAT IS A MENTOR?*

The mentor is a wise and trusted friend who guides the personal and professional development of another individual.

The mentor is understanding and motivating--enhancing the student's vision of accomplishment.

AS A KEY MEMBER OF THE STUDENT'S SUPPORT SYSTEM, THE PUENTE MENTOR:

BOOSTS SELF-ESTEEM
--Believes in the student
--Renews the student's self-confidence
--Reflects confidence in the student to others

UNDERSTANDS THE STUDENT'S DREAM AND ENHANCES THE STUDENT'S VISION
--Believes the student's dream is worthwhile
--Helps the student expand his horizons
--Encourages the student to have a "think big" perspective
--May help the student map out a plan of action for achieving goals

SUPPORTS THE STUDENT'S EDUCATIONAL AND CAREER GOALS
--Exposes the student to career professionals, administrators, and faculty
--Broadens the student contacts on campus and in the community

INTRODUCES THE STUDENT TO THE EDUCATIONAL OR BUSINESS STRUCTURE, ITS POLITICS, AND ITS PLAYERS
--Teaches the student the language of the academic or business community
--Helps the student become a part of that community
--Shares the philosophy and values of the community and its leaders
--Offers advice on developing and using a network of contacts within the community

PROVIDES ADVICE, COUNSEL, AND SUPPORT
--Supports the student's efforts
--Alerts the student to blind alleys and obstacles
--Provides pertinent job-related information

COMMUNICATES
--Encourages the student to achieve the goals he has established
--Provides perspective on how others see the student
--Gives the student opportunities to assume additional responsibilities
--Provides insight into writing as an essential element in the mentor's work

ACTS AS A ROLE MODEL
--Exemplifies professional ethics and behavior
--Stresses the value of confidentiality
--Displays ethnic and cultural pride
--Expresses a positive attitude toward work and the community

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*This guide was developed by PUENTE Project faculty at El Cerritos College.

THE VALUE OF MENTORING

"THE VALUE OF MENTORING*

The PUENTE Project
Evergreen Valley College

Prepared by Mauro Chavez

The PUENTE Project at Evergreen Valley College is conditioned upon demonstrable values--values to the student, to the college, to the mentor, and to the community. Outlined on the following pages are values that mentorship has the potential for providing, to program participants and the local community.

Values to Student

Helps the student experience a career area and clarify career goals. The mentor relation permits the student to determine its applicability to his/her own interests and abilities. The mentor's advisement and the opportunity for the student to immerse oneself in the "professional environment" is of an important educational value, since he/she is better prepared to make a more enlightened career choice.

Accentuates the importance of assuming responsibility. PUENTE students must accept responsibility for following up on their mentor contacts, interviewing them, and writing the mentor paper. Mentors may hold students accountable for fulfilling their mentor assignments, such as making an appointment, conducting a prepared interview, writing their mentor paper, and sharing results.

Sensitizes students to academic performance and staying in college. Students enrolled in the PUENTE Project see new relevancy in their classroom instruction. Comparisons of grade point average and attrition rates reveal a superior performance for PUENTE students over other students ("A Study of the PUENTE Project - 1983-86"; Atondo, Chavez, Regua, 1987).

Instills cognitive and attitudinal skills critical to successful job performance. PUENTE students have the special advantage of interrelating classroom writing experiences with success and the importance of cultural identity. Pride and a positive self-concept become a reality and not some vague concept which may be understood only abstractly in the classroom.

Provides a matching of mentor to personal needs. Mentors are selected because of their relevance to students' needs, personal interests and career objectives. Accordingly, students' capabilities and interests are matched with appropriate mentors to maximize educational impact.

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*This article is based on an adaptation of Barry Heermann's article, "Potentials and Pitfalls," in Cooperative Education In Community Colleges. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Boss Pub., 1973.

Sensitizes students to interpersonal relationships. PUENTE students via their mentors become aware of formal and informal organizational relationships and the importance of human relations. In particular, they learn how to get along with people in work settings integral to the organization as well as those serviced by it.

Decreases the sense of cultural isolation of the Hispanic student. The PUENTE student in particular benefits from the mentor experience since he/she is able to relate more fully with the efforts of the mentor to work within a cultural context. Hispanic success in the mainstream of community economic and social activity is particularly significant to this student's self-esteem and ability to contribute meaningfully to his/her educational endeavor.

Provides direct contact with Hispanic leaders. Students work with practitioners in the field and observe firsthand what is necessary to success in that occupation. As a result of these contacts, they have far greater employment opportunities upon graduation. In addition, they will receive instruction from practitioners in techniques that cannot be learned in the classroom, thereby augmenting their experiential learning.

Demonstrates the importance of formal education to job success. The mentor experience contributes ideal conditions whereby students can relate classroom learning to many situations in the world outside the classroom. As a result, they appreciate--probably much more than other students do--the contributions of in-class instruction to performance in the work situation.

Fosters understanding of the subtleties of the professional world. The mentor allows the student the opportunity to observe such important professional dimensions as decision making, planning, organizing, and written communication skills under actual conditions as they relate to effective work performance.

Bridges the community and college gap. The students' contacts with his/her mentor allows him/her to see relationships between the world of work and academia. Moreover, students learn to appreciate the Hispanic professionals capacity to bridge these two worlds.

Allows for the development of critical social skills in a work setting. PUENTE students observe firsthand the importance of dress, grooming, punctuality, courtesy, poise, and clear and concise language to job success. These are skills that cannot be readily learned in the classroom of a college campus.

Aids the adjustment to the college and the achievement of higher-level needs. Fitting in as an integral part of the college and community is a major concern of Hispanic students, but mentors allow for a smoother articulation from college to work and provide a better notion of the school's relationship to the achievement of personal goals.

Values to the College

Provides a college-community interchange. By virtue of the mentor viewpoint, the college and the community interrelate on a scale never before realized. Not only are students interacting with the community's primary business, political, and organizational leaders, but faculty and staff are necessarily involved in the interchange of learning and practice (especially if faculty carry out the coordination function).

Improves student retention. A number of studies (Lindenmery, 1967; Smith, 1965; Gore, 1972) reveal that students involved in experienced-based programs are less inclined to drop out of college than traditional students. The variety of classroom and out-of-classroom experiences, coupled with mentor contacts in the real world, strengthens the student's ties to his education.

Provides outside expertise that cannot easily be duplicated on campus. The mentor program allows the college to draw upon the resources and knowledge of the Hispanic community to assist in the higher educational development, retention, and graduation of Hispanics.

Achieves greater responsiveness to need. The close partnership between the college and community mentor made possible through the PUENTE Project results in a greater responsiveness of the college to the needs of the community.

Facilitates counseling. Under the cooperative plan, students are encouraged to establish realistic goals as a part of their academic endeavor. The counseling process takes on a new vitality as students begin to actively formulate personal and career choices.

Clarifies the college function to the community. Members of the community, through mentor contacts with the college, become increasingly cognizant of the community college philosophy, purposes, programs, and services.

Familiarizes potential employers with the skills of the PUENTE students. Mentors are able to observe firsthand the capability of PUENTE community college students in achieving educational goals and becoming community leaders.

Focuses on the student process of making career choices. Community mentorship, offered as an integral part of the general education curricula, moves the college significantly ahead in guiding Hispanic students to career objectives, enabling them to plan their studies more realistically.

Provides for an ongoing self-renewal of faculty. The PUENTE college faculty is constantly kept abreast of the latest developments and innovations in the professional world and community. Program decisions concerning curriculum and instruction are conditioned on the most current and up-to-date information in the field. Moreover, contacts with practitioners make the faculty more knowledgeable.

Allows for immediate feedback regarding program success. The college--via feedback through mentors and students, and employers--is better able to evaluate curriculum, teaching, advising, and other aspects of program success. The adequacy of programs can be judged on a regular and continuing basis.

Recruits new students. Students and parents alike are attracted to community college education programs. People who may have been traditionally negative toward college education but positive toward the work ethic will be persuaded to encourage their son or daughter to attend the community college because of the benefits of a career orientation afforded by the PUENTE Project mentor program.

Benefits to the Community

Provides a pool of college-educated Hispanics. The mentorship of students will increase their understanding of the community's social and economic structures and make them more readily adaptable to local needs. They are better prepared to understand their community and intelligently contribute to the solution of community problems and to the economic well-being of the community.

Increases rapport between college and community. The college and community form a strengthened bond in a new partnership where each is more respectful and understanding of the other's mission. The notion on the part of some citizenry that the community college is a "fortress" in defense of and at odds with the Hispanic community is minimized by the PUENTE Project.

Increases students' sense of leadership and responsibility. Students who are participants in the mentor program identify with Hispanic role models who are sensitive and responsive to the needs of their community. Therefore, in contrast to many traditional students, PUENTE students hope to achieve positions of community leadership in order to contribute to the effectiveness of decision making in technical, social, political, or economic realms.

Increases the likelihood that students will remain in the community. Students enrolled in the PUENTE mentor program are assimilated into the community prior to graduation--not after graduation. The student develops a strong community orientation as he studies and relates his/her knowledge to the community environment.

Introduces students to community opportunities. Through the partnership of college and community, students are provided the opportunity to sample from a spectrum of career opportunities. The community is offered the unique medium of the mentor program to present itself to PUENTE students.

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES/SUGGESTIONS

FOR THE PUENTE MENTOR

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES/SUGGESTIONS
FOR THE PUENTE MENTOR

Prepared by
Margarita Maestas-Flores

INTRODUCTION

First-time mentors to the PUENTE Project and the mentor experience may find themselves with questions as to expectations and how to best assist the PUENTE student. The following guidelines and suggestions are based upon mentor experiences, student comments, and the interests of the faculty who coordinate the PUENTE Project at Evergreen Valley College.

WHO CONTACTS WHOM?

In their PUENTE English course, students are given a mentor profile form which lists their mentor's name, address, and telephone number, as well as a brief description of their position, educational degrees held, and other relevant information (Appendix I). The profile information is used by the student to write a letter of introduction. This letter is followed with a telephone call to arrange an interview date. During this same time period, mentors receive a letter from the PUENTE Mentor Liaison notifying them of their assigned student and his/her telephone number; the letter will also give the mentor an approximate date to expect the student letter of introduction and telephone call. Mentors are encouraged to follow the letter of introduction with a note, card, or letter of acknowledgment to the student.

Although it is the responsibility of the student to make the initial contact, mentors should realize that the majority find this the most difficult assignment. Some never call their mentor or give up after one unsuccessful attempt. In the event a student does not call by an established date, the mentor is to contact the PUENTE Mentor Liaison. If no special circumstances exist, the mentor is to make the initial telephone call.

Mentors are asked to alert office support staff who answer the telephone and schedule appointments of their involvement in the project. The staff person(s) should have the student's name and be advised of the importance of a warm and friendly reception to the call as well as follow up to establish the mentor/student contact.

INTERVIEW LOCATION/SETTING

An ideal interview situation should involve different environments in order to allow the student an adjustment period. The transition should be from an informal setting for introductions to a more formal location for the interview.

The informal session will allow the student to relax, to adjust to the work surroundings of the mentor, and, most important, to begin to see that the mentor is an individual to whom he/she can relate. At this time, the mentor might consider a role reversal--asking the student to share some of his/her background, experiences, and goals. A tour of the mentor's work facilities can also be a successful activity to allow the transition from an informal setting to a more formal one.

Once the initial introduction is complete, the interview should be set in an area where distractions or interruptions are nonexistent or very minimal--away from telephone calls, staff interruptions, heavy traffic areas, or excessive noise. A comfortable seating arrangement should be planned with a writing area available. The student should also be seated next to the mentor, never across a formal desk setting.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS/SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

PUENTE students will use a guide listing questions to be asked of the mentor during the interview (see Appendix A). Mentors should, however, consider developing an outline of areas they would like to share. A collection of materials for reference, for the student's use in developing the mentor paper, or for the student's future referral in career planning will also be helpful.

Each mentor will have individual experiences to share with the PUENTE student. The project faculty suggests that, in addition to this information and responses to the student's questions, the mentor address the following.

1. The relevance of English language skill development to academic and professional success

2. The degree to which written and oral communication skills are a part of the mentor's profession

3. Experiences with someone who may have served as a "mentor for the mentor" during his/her personal, academic, or professional life

4. Being a Hispanic in the profession--positive and/or negative experiences

5. Advisement or sharing of insights into the basic "political" realities and interpersonal conflicts which are common in the professional work setting

6. The mentor's experiences as a student

INTERVIEW PERIOD

There is no set standard for the interview period. Consideration of the following activities will aid in planning a successful session.

1. An informal introductory session is to be allowed.

2. A minimum of one hour should be allowed for responses to the student's prepared questions.

3. A tour of the mentor's work facilities should be planned and conducted.

4. If possible, the student can be allowed an opportunity to observe the mentor during working hours.

5. Subsequent interviews may be appropriate at the request of student and/or mentor.

6. Mentors may find some PUENTE students ask to accompany another PUENTE student to their interview--for personal knowledge and exposure to other professional areas.

FOLLOW UP

PUENTE students are required to follow the interview with a letter of appreciation. The decision to share a completed mentor paper is left to the student, but the mentor may wish to specifically make this request at the time of the interview.

Mentor's may also consider writing a letter of appreciation to the student after the interview. Follow-up activities on a long-term basis are also a possibility and have occurred between mentors/students in the past. Notifying the student of conferences, workshops, organizational meetings, or professional organizations where the student may attend with or without the mentor are excellent opportunities for the student to further pursue career interests. Referral of professional literature, publications, or periodicals also allow continued exposure for the student.

SUMMARY

The PUENTE mentor/student experience need not be considered over when the formalities of the interview, the writing assignment, and the follow up have all taken place. A sharing of oneself with someone who aspires to improve and achieve can only result in positive reflections, reflections which span a long period of time.

The mentor will have had an opportunity to reflect upon personal experiences, to share these experiences, and to recall the memories of once having been a student. The student, on the other hand, will have had the opportunity to see a Hispanic professional in a role that may have once seemed unattainable. A successful mentor/student experience will also allow the student to realize there are very few differences between them, the major difference being time and the choices made in its use.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

STUDENT GUIDE
FOR
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The following questions will serve as an interview guide when you conduct your mentor interview and write your mentor paper for English 1A. This guide is comprised of ten core and ten optional questions from which you may choose. You are also greatly encouraged to formulate your own questions. However, keep in mind the core questions and plan to include them in your mentor interview.

CORE QUESTIONS

These questions may be rephrased if you choose to do so.

1. Did your family agree with you when you told them that you wanted to get a college education? Did this reaction change as you continued to study?

2. Did you ever feel like quitting school? What made you change your mind?

3. Roughly, what was the average amount of time you spent studying in a normal week or day? How was your social life affected?

4. Did you research career choices before you chose yours? How many career choices did you have?

5. Why did you choose this career? Who helped you make your career choice? Was it your first major in college? Was your major oriented to your present career?

6. How long did it take for you to attain your present career? Do you still have another higher goal to reach?

7. Do you enjoy your profession? Are there good chances for "upward mobility" in your career?

8. What would you say to other Mexican Americans or Hispanics who worry about facing discrimination in the job world or in education? Do you feel there is discrimination in your professional field? If you have faced prejudice, how did you overcome it?

9. Did you ever experience "culture shock" in either your profession or in your education? If so, how did you resolve this experience?

10. Are you presently involved in community or professional organizations? What are the organizations in which you are involved?

OPTIONAL QUESTIONS

These questions may also be rephrased as you choose.

1. As a woman, how did your convince your traditional Hispanic parents to accept your decision to go to college? If you left home for college, how did your parents handle this decision?

2. Did you have a particular professor, schoolmate, or professional colleague who motivated or inspired you more than others? Was that person Hispanic?

3. Did you have a role model or mentor in college or in your professional field who inspired you? Was that person Hispanic?

4. Was it difficult to choose a major? Did you ever change your major?

5. What satisfaction do you get from your job?

6. Do you like your career as much as you thought you would?

7. Did you have any problems in the transition from high school to college?

8. As a Hispanic woman, did you face problems with relationships (family, spouse, boyfriend, girlfriends) because you chose to attend college and prepare for a professional career? How did you resolve these situations?

9. How did you pay for your education? If you worked during college, how many hours a week did you work? Was that work related to your major/ career choice?

10. With your education and experience, what advice would you give to me as I begin my college studies?

APPENDIX B

Student Assignments
For
PUENTE Mentor Activities

WRITING THE MENTOR PAPER

The mentor assignment includes several activities, each with its own objective and due date.

1. Write a letter introducing yourself to your mentor.

2. Call your mentor to schedule the interview appointment.

3. Study the "Student Guide for Interview Questions" and develop optional questions you wish to ask.

4. Conduct the interview.

5. Submit the mentor paper.

6. Share the experience and your mentor paper with your PUENTE classmates.

7. Write a letter of appreciation to your mentor.

Following these steps will ensure that you benefit the most from the mentor assignment. Our mentors are concerned Hispanics eager to meet with you and to share some of their experiences and thoughts. They are aware of your responsibilities in this assignment and will help you as much as possible.

OTHER MENTOR/STUDENT ACTIVITIES

--Tour of the mentor's company/organization

--Invitation(s) to attend workshops or conferences with mentor

--Introduction to other professionals in the career field of the mentor

--Invitations to luncheons or dinners with mentor

--Invitations to attend staff meetings within the mentor's organization

APPENDIX C
SAMPLE MENTOR PAPER

CAREER DECISIONS
BY
PEARL DELGADO

I wasn't sure if I would be able to find the office of Ms. Ortega at Santa Clara University. Therefore, I went to the campus a few days before our initial visit. I found her office without any problem. We met each other the very same day. Ms. Ortega is a very warm and friendly person. I no longer had butterflies in my stomach about the interview I was to conduct later in the week.

Ms. Ortega and I ate lunch on campus in the faculty lounge. We passed through the mission and talked a bit about the mission on the campus. The lounge had eating areas both inside and out. Because of the beautiful weather, we chose to eat our lunch outside. We hit it off almost immediately. One item of discussion led to another, so I began writing the information down and to eat at the same time. I didn't in any way feel uncomfortable, and neither did she.

Ms. Ortega began college after high school at San Jose State University. However, she dropped out of college to get married. She married a man named Mr. Webb. They had three children, all girls. But unfortunately, the marriage didn't last too long. She maintained custody of their three children. Afterwards, Ms. Ortega was on welfare for about one year. Then she decided to make something of herself. She went back to San Jose State University to pick up where she left off before she had gotten married. Due to her determination and hard work, she received a Baccalaureate in Journalism and Psychology. She wasn't yet sure of a career she would like to enter.

After her graduation, she still wanted to continue her education. She transferred to U.C. Berkeley and worked toward a Master's degree. While attending classes at U.C. Berkeley, her children (now adolescents), would go to their own school. The single-parent family lived in student housing. Ms. Ortega held a part time job on the campus as a teacher's assistant. Again after hard work and a lot of struggling, she received her Master's degree.

An opening for an instructor was available at Chabot Community College. Ms. Ortega applied for the position and was hired; therefore, she left the assistant job at U.C. Berkeley and the student housing as well. As a full time instructor she taught many students. Two were the key starters of the PUENTE program, Pat and Felix. This job provided a very good income, but she still felt something was missing. In 1968, Ms. Ortega left her position and headed back to school for more "horrendous work."

Ms. Ortega realized she wanted to become a lawyer. After three years at Stanford University, she received her JD degree in law.

In 1973, at the age of 43, Ms. Ortega was now in a new profession. She was a criminal defense lawyer working from 60 to 70 stressful hours a week. After four years, she left her associates to get her own practice started. The work hours and stress out-did her, and after one year she decided to leave the field.

Today Ms. Ortega is a Director at Santa Clara University. She likes this position because of the comfortable atmosphere. She is able to go about her daily work without anyone hovering over her. She has worked there for eight years and never finds it boring. There is no immediate supervisor above her, so she is able to do her own thing and set her own work hours. Most of all, Ms. Ortega likes to build friendships with students to help them as much as possible. This is because while she was going through school, she had no one to help her with support.

Although she doesn't earn the large income she once had, she finds herself to be more at peace. Some people will practically kill themselves to do more for money, such as working in heavily stress-related jobs with very long hours. Ms. Ortega feels that big paying jobs don't have the same satisfaction for everyone. She has balanced her income with what she enjoys doing.

Ms. Ortega and I had a great time getting to know each other. She feels that her divorce and welfare living were a few events that have affected her life. A strong turning point was getting back into college to receive her first degree. She told me that without a degree it's hard to get your foot through the door. Ms. Ortega had to build her own self-confidence. She feels this to be an asset within herself. She stated, "People with strong self confidence are less likely to be pushed around."

I asked Ms. Ortega how she felt about this PUENTE Program. She had often heard about this project, but was never too sure on how to go about getting involved. It was just this semester that she was contacted to participate. When she went through college, there wasn't anyone to guide her. It was hard for her to keep up high spirits. Now she has many contacts and is willing to help students make those important contacts or to give advice. She stated "You never know when a personal contact with someone will come in handy."

Ms. Ortega said she will probably retire in another five years. Then her next goal in life will be to publish some poetry books. She does a lot of writing in her free time. I enjoyed meeting with Ms. Ortega. We had a wonderful lunch and a quite interesting conversation getting to know one another. Should I ever want to meet with her again or make contacts through her, all I have to do is give her a call.

APPENDIX D

EVERGREEN VALLEY COLLEGE

PUENTE PROJECT
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1987-88

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Mr. Jerry Sauceda

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Project Coordinator

Mr. Angelo Atondo
Counselor

Ms. Margarita Maestas-Flores
Mentor Liaison/Recruiter

Mr. Richard Regua
English Instructor

APPENDIX E

EVERGREEN VALLEY COLLEGE

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FALL 1987

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San Jose City College

AUTO TECHNOLOGY

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Instructor
Dorsa Elementary School

17. Mr. Ramon Martinez
Assoc. Principal, Admin. Services
Andrew Hill High School

*18. Ms. Angelina Rodarte
Asst. Dean of Student Services
West Valley College

19. Mr. Gil Perez
Director of Business Services
Berryessa Unified School District

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Associate Director
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Stanford University

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University of Santa Clara

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Deputy
Santa Clara Co. Sheriff's Dept.

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County of Santa Clara

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APPENDIX G

STATEWIDE PUENTE PROJECTS

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25555 Hesperian Boulevard
Hayward, CA 94545

East Los Angeles College
1301 Brooklyn Avenue
Monterey Park, CA 91754

El Camino College
16007 Crenshaw Boulevard
Torrance, CA 90506

Evergreen Valley College
3095 Yerba Buena Road
San Jose, CA 95135

Fresno City College
1101 East University Avenue
Fresno, CA 93741

Gavilan College
5055 Santa Teresa Boulevard
Gilroy, CA 95020

Laney College
900 Fallon Street
Oakland, CA 94607

Ohlone College
43600 Mission Boulevard
Fremont, CA 94539

Rancho Santiago College
17th at Bristol
Santa Ana, CA 92706

Sacramento City College
3835 Freeport Boulevard
Sacramento, CA 95822

San Bernardino Valley College
701 South Mt. Vernon Avenue
San Bernardino, CA 92410

Evergreen project sharpens skills

Program matches Hispanic students with mentors in the community

By Stan Moreillon
Mercury News Staff Writer

Most students in Evergreen Valley College's Puente Project enter with English skills significantly below college level.

By the time they complete the special writing course, their skills are at the college level, says Angelo Atondo, an Evergreen counselor and one of three educators who run the course for students of Hispanic background at Evergreen.

Atondo works with Mauro Chavez, Social Science and Ethnic Studies instructor, and Richard Regua, English instructor.

Puente Project is a two-semester writing, counseling and mentoring course designed for students with poor grades, low placement scores in English and hazy career goals.

Evergreen is one of 10 community colleges in California that offer the course. It was started in 1982 at Chabot College in Hayward and now is established in five Northern and five Southern California community colleges.

Co-sponsors of the program are the University of California's Office of the President and the Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

Puente Project integrates the skills of an English teacher, a Mexican-American counselor and local professional people with Hispanic roots as mentors into a team. The team helps students sharpen their writing skills, improve their grades and begin to focus on career plans.

"We pair each student with a mentor we have selected to match the student's personal and career interests," Chavez said. "The student writes a formal letter to his mentor asking for an interview. He follows up with a telephone call and sets up an appointment.

"He interviews his mentor on the job. The student can focus on the mentor's personal background, his business or the challenges of being Hispanic. He writes an article based on what he has learned, then writes a thank-you letter to the mentor.

"In return, the mentor shows samples of his own on-the-job writing to the student, emphasizing that he must master writing English to be successful in any field."

"The articles run from 1,000 to 1,500 words," Regua said. "Some are reflective; some compare their mentors to themselves or to people they know."

Each student is required to write at least one interview article a semester, plus a term paper. "These are in addition to their regular assignments in English 1A, freshman composition," Regua said.

Puente Project is in its third year at Evergreen. Student retention rate for the course is 80 percent, according to Atondo.

"The significance of this is that the dropout rate is only 20 percent, compared to a 40-to-60-percent dropout rate for community college courses in general," he said.

"We recruit students during the summer," Atondo said. "We thought recruitment would be the hardest part of the project. It turned out to be the easiest. They like the idea after we explain it; they jump at the chance to improve themselves."

About 40 students enroll in the course a semester. Atondo noted that 26 members of the 1984-85 class went on to enroll in general courses and are pursuing majors.

Mentors for the 1985-86 course include Frank Romero, manager of Bank of America's Capitol-Berryessa Branch, San Jose; Rose Amador, executive director, Center for Training and Careers, San Jose; Gus Lerma, senior research engineer, Lockheed Missiles & Space Co., Sunnyvale.

Also, Fernando Zazueta, attorney with the Boccardo Law Firm, San Jose; Chief Ike Hernandez, Bureau of Field Operations, San Jose Police Department; Dr. George Castro, manager, Physical Sciences Department, IBM, San Jose.

Esperanza Walters, R.N., director, South Bay Area Health Education Center, San Jose; Al Ramirez, associate director, Catholic Social Service of Santa Clara County, San Jose; and Dr. Armando Valdez, associate director, Stanford Center for Chicano Research, Stanford University.

APPENDIX I

EVERGREEN VALLEY COLLEGE
PUENTE PROJECT

MENTOR PROFILE

NAME _____
Last First Middle

ORGANIZATION NAME _____

POSITION _____ DEPARTMENT _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____ (Business)

_____ (Home)

POSITION DESCRIPTION _____

_____

_____

_____

DEGREES HELD/DISCIPLINE/GRANTING COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

_____

_____

_____

AWARDS OR OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

_____

_____

_____

PUENTE PROJECT

BRIDGE TO SUCCESS

San Jose/Evergreen Community College District

Evergreen Valley College

WHAT IS THE PUENTE PROJECT?

The Puente Project is a year-long (fall/spring) writing counseling/mentorship model designed to help Hispanic students to achieve academically and to compete successfully in the general education and occupational curriculum. The project model consists of a two-semester course sequence: English 330 (Improvement in Writing) offered in the Fall Semester; English 1A (English Composition) offered in the Spring Semester. The same students remain with the same teacher for the entire two-course sequence. A staff member is primarily responsible for recruiting mentors, for matching students with mentors, and for supervising and evaluating mentor-student outcomes.

THE PUENTE MODEL

Puente integrates the skills of an English teacher, a Hispanic counselor, and Hispanic professionals into a team structure which attempts to assist Hispanic students make academic improvements, build self-confidence, and motivate them to achieve educational and career goals. Working together, the counselor, teacher, and mentor provide students with individual, non-traditional counseling; with writing instruction that engenders improvement in all college course work; and with personal contact with Hispanic professionals who serve as role models and mentors.

This process of linking classroom learning with community mentors has proven highly successful. Students not only gain a greater understanding of "what it takes" to "make it," but students learn that professional success does not mean – as some students assert – "forgetting who you are." Students develop a greater appreciation and respect for the ability of mentors to effectively bridge two worlds.

San Jose/Evergreen Community College District
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San Jose, CA 95135-1598

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Pharmacist

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Mr. Jerry Sauceda

FACULTY

Mr. Angelo Atondo
Puente Counselor

Mr. Mauro Chavez
Puente Program Review
Coordinator

Ms. Margarita Maestas-Flores
Puente Mentor Liaison/Recruiter

Mr. Richard Regua
Puente English Instructor

MENTORS
1986-1987

AUTO TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Daniel Reyes
Automotive Instructor
Gavilan Community College

BUSINESS/INDUSTRY

Ms. Rose Amador
Executive Director
Center for Training and Careers

Mr. Henry Estrada
Instructor, Computer Sciences
Evergreen Valley College

Ms. Angeles Luna
Branch Manager
California Federal Savings & Loan

Mr. A. G. Lerma
Product Assurance Engineer, Senior
Lockheed Missiles and Space Company, Inc.

Mr. Rudy Lopez
Drafting Manager
IBM

Ms. Terry Ramirez
IBM

Mr. Frank Romero, Vice-President
International Science Center Branch
Bank of America

Mr. Enrique Ruelas
Accounting Instructor
Foothill Community College

Mr. Fred Yepiz
Manager, Engineering Department
IBM

PUENTE FACULTY

MR. ANGELO ATONDO

Mr. Atondo graduated from the University of San Francisco with a B.A. in Philosophy and a double minor in English and Spanish. He received his M.A. in Pupil Personnel from the University of Santa Clara. He has been an academic counselor at Evergreen Valley College since 1975, specializing in the areas of Business Administration and Computer Science. He has been involved as the counselor of the Puente Project since its inception in 1983 and considers it one of his most rewarding educational experiences.

MR. MAURO CHAVEZ

Mr. Chavez received his B.A. in Sociology from San Jose State University, an M.A. in Social Science Education from Stanford University, and another M.A. in Mexican American Graduate Studies (Urban Affairs Emphasis) from San Jose State University. Currently Mr. Chavez is completing his doctoral dissertation through NOVA University, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. He has taught at Evergreen Valley College since 1976. Courses include sociology, race-relations, Mexican American culture, communications studies, community organization, and organizational leadership. Prior to Evergreen he taught at San Jose City College in Mexican American Studies and graduate seminars in public administration and social planning through MAGS at San Jose State. At San Jose State he was also a masters thesis/project advisor for their Urban Affairs program. He served as the Mentor Liaison/Recruiter for Puente from 1983-1986 and is presently Program Review Coordinator for the EVC Puente Project. His experiences in many educational programs convince him that Puente represents a definite "breakthrough" on how educational institutions can effectively serve the needs of Hispanic students.

MS. MARGARITA MAESTAS-FLORES

Ms. Flores received her B.S. in Business Administration from San Jose State University and an M.A. in Education from the University of San Francisco. She began at Evergreen in 1981 after teaching business skills at Foothill Community College in Los Altos Hills. Prior to teaching, she was a member of the San Jose City College secretarial staff. Her occupational experience and curriculum development in individualized instruction have resulted in implementation of individualized business skills labs for Foothill College and Evergreen. Prior to beginning as the Puente Mentor Liaison/Recruiter, she served as a Puente mentor for two years. Her own experience with Hispanic role models reinforces her conclusion that mentors influence one's aspirations and accomplishments.

MR. RICHARD REGUA

Mr. Regua, a graduate of San Jose High School, received his B.A. in English and his M.A. in Mexican American Studies from San Jose State University. After teaching English, reading, and math at San Jose High for one year, he joined the Mexican American Studies Department of San Jose City College. Since 1976 he has taught composition and Mexican American literature courses at Evergreen Valley College. Having taught English for the Puente Project since 1983, he views Puente as an effective method of retaining Hispanic students while improving their writing skills.

WHO QUALIFIES FOR PUENTE?

Students qualify for the Puente Project based upon their comprehension and vocabulary test scores from the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT). A student is eligible for Puente if his/her comprehension test score is 25-37 and vocabulary test score is 22-33 on the SDRT. According to the EVC course placement criteria, the above scores qualify these students for English 330 (Improvement of Writing) at Evergreen Valley College. (See Puente counselor for further details.)

COUNSELING

The Puente counselor meets with the students on a regular basis both in and outside of the English class, monitoring their academic progress. In addition, the Puente counselor helps the students set career goals, take appropriate courses, and prepare to transfer to a four-year college or university or to assume an entry-level career position in the local business and industrial community.

MENTOR/STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Students spend a minimum of eight hours each semester interviewing their mentors. Mentors share personal, academic, and career advice; introduce students to their colleagues; invite students to career and professional conferences and work-related activities; and provide resources for student writing assignments. The student/mentor interviews form the basis of many Puente writing assignments.

PUENTE STUDENT DATA

A three-year evaluation study of 115 Puente students between 1983-1986 at Evergreen revealed several significant facts. While Puente students accounted for only 30 percent of the total Hispanic students enrolled in English 330 during fall 1983, fall 1984, and fall 1985, they accounted for 45 percent of the total who completed English 330; 80 percent of the total who completed English 1A; 89 percent of the total who finished English 1B; and 56 percent of the total number of Hispanics currently enrolled in EVC who began at the English 330 level.

The study also concluded that:

Puente students are more successfully "mainstreamed" into the general education and occupational curriculum than their Hispanic counterparts (non-Puente).

Puente students have comparatively higher retention rates than their Hispanic counterparts (non-Puente).

The Puente Project greatly enhances the occupational preparation and transfer potential of Hispanics into four-year institutions, as well as completion of requirements of the A.A. degree.

ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges
JAN 29 1988